

INTERVIEW PREPARATION

Before the Interview

- Be clear when, where and on which day the interview is going to take place.
- Ask to be sent directions or a map. Find out about parking or the nearest station
- Find out the names and job titles of the people who will be interviewing.
- It's also a good idea to get an idea of how long the interview will take.

Preparation

- Review your CV before your interview. Decide what your main strengths are, but similarly, identify some weaknesses and have a phrase ready for countering them in a positive way.
- Research the company. The easiest place to start your research is on the internet, but other useful sources of information include reference libraries, company reports and marketing or publicity literature. Find out about the company's products or services, locations, number of employees etc.
- Look again at the job description; you will need to show that your experience can benefit the company
- Think about the kind of questions you are likely to be asked and prepare answers. (see TM Q's you may be asked)
- Write a list of questions you want to ask about the company or job and take it with you to the interview
- Think about your image. You never get a second chance to make a first impression. Decide what to wear in advance and make sure your clothes are clean and presentable.
- Plan your journey. Remember to allow time for traffic disruptions, parking etc.

The Interview

- First and foremost, arrive on time. Ensure you know the name of the person you are seeing.
- When greeted by the interviewer, your handshake should be firm. Sit down when invited, be alert and enthusiastic. Sit upright but relaxed and try not to fidget. Do not fold your arms across your chest; be open to the interviewer.
- Your smile should be natural and your voice should convey enthusiasm. Be wary of talking too much; as a general guide, you should be contributing about 50% of the conversation. Similarly, try not to talk too quickly.
- Keep regular eye contact, but do not stare. Try not to look at your watch or out of the window as this will imply you are not interested and can be very distracting for the interviewer.
- Most importantly, be confident and positive.
- At the end of the interview, thank the interviewer for their time and make your exit gracefully!

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Questions you may be asked

Your answers should be comprehensive but relevant. Try not to get carried away; stick to the point. You must expect to be asked awkward or difficult questions.

About the Company/job

- What do you know about what the company does?
- What skills would you bring to this company?
- When considering joining a new company, what are some of the factors you take into account?
- Why should we give you the job?

About You

- How would you describe yourself?
- Tell me about your career to date
- What would you like to be doing in 5 years time?
- What do you consider are your main achievements?
- What do you consider to be your main strengths?
- What do you consider to be your main weaknesses?

About your current job

- What do you like about your current job?
- What do you dislike about your current job?
- Tell me about a difficult situation and how you tackled it
- What kind of decisions do you find most difficult to make?
- Why do you want to leave your current job?
- How would your present manager/supervisor describe you?

And the responses.....What the interviewer really wants to know!

Tell me about your career to date

Make it relevant to the position you are being interviewed for. The interviewer does not want a blow by blow account of every job you have ever had

Why do you want to leave your current job?

At all costs avoid saying anything negative about your current employer. Good stock phrases to use are things like 'I am looking for a new challenge'

What do you consider to be your main strengths?

Make them relevant to the position and back up each one with an example of when you have shown them.
What do you consider to be your main weaknesses?

One or two weaknesses only. You need to be able to tell the interviewer what you have done to overcome them

What would you like to be doing in 5 years time?

Think about your ambitions but make sure you have taken into account what the interviewer has already told you about the job.

Why should we give you the job?

Tell them why your experience, strengths and personality make you the right person for the role. And don't forget to tell them that you really want the job!

Your List of Questions

Prepare questions before the interview. Try to make sure your questions are open-ended; this will encourage your interviewer to talk. This will give the impression that you are genuinely interested and you will get extra information from them.

About the Company

- Can you tell me more about the company's products/services?
- What are the company's plans for the future?
- How is the company structured?

About the Job

- What goals/results will I be expected to achieve?
- Will I be expected to travel/ how much of my time will be spent travelling?
- Who will I be reporting to?
- What particular problems would I be expected to deal with?
- Is this a new or existing position?
- How do you see the successful candidate progressing?

Some Questions to Avoid

- If you ask about career progression, be careful that your interest in future roles does not outweigh your enthusiasm for the job on offer.
- Never voice any reservations about the job. If it's not the job for you, you do not have to take up an offer.
- Use caution if asking about salaries. Indicate your salary range as it will give you room to negotiate to your advantage if they decide they want you